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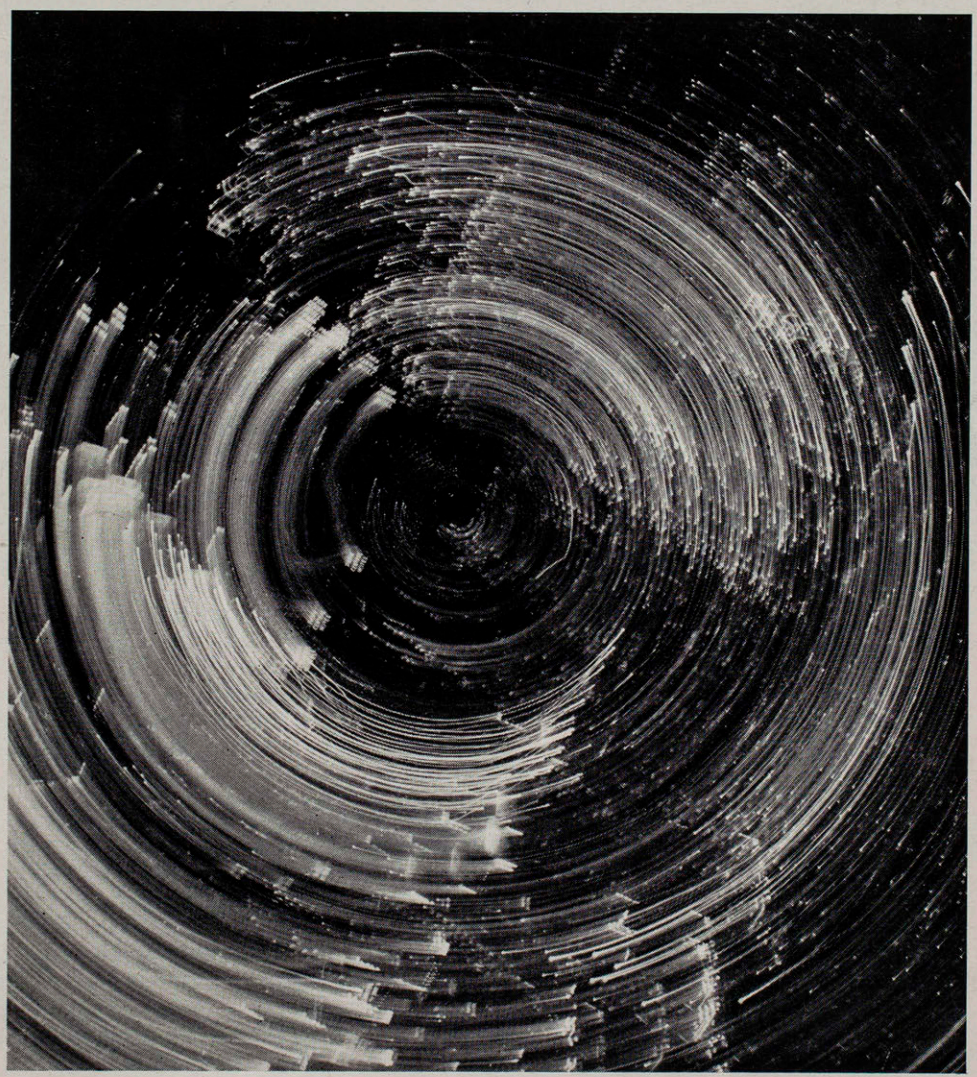


FRITZ HENLE—Photograph, "The Lights of Manhattan"

(From the exhibition *Seventeen American Photographers*)

SEVENTEEN AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS*

"To see life;
to see the world;
to eyewitness great events;
to watch the faces of the poor and
the gestures of the proud;
to see strange things—machines,
armies, multitudes, shadows in the
jungles, and on the moon,
to see man's work—his paintings,
towers and discoveries;
to see things thousands of miles
away, things hidden behind walls
and within rooms, things
dangerous to come to;
the women that men love and
many children;
to see and take pleasure in seeing;
to see and be amazed;
to see and be instructed;
thus to see, and to be shown, is
now the will and new expectancy
of half mankind."

—From LIFE's "Prospectus for a New Magazine," 1936.

This statement from America's leading picture magazine reveals the basic importance of photography in our time. With a visual experience unparalleled in man's history, the 20th century has, thanks to the camera, developed a taste and need for seeing as great as the very veracity which photography has made possible for its pleasure, amazement and information.

Over a century has passed since the earliest Daguerreotype and numerous other inventions and improvements led to the creation of modern photographic technique. The paths traversed were many. But from its earliest essays photography developed in two broad directions: the naturalistic, which sought to reproduce nature as nature, and the pictorial, which sought to reproduce nature as art, that is, according to the principles of painting. A third direction, the so-called experimental, has still further complicated the question of the various purposes of the medium.

The outstanding step forward in American photography was the revolt against mid-19th century over-naturalism and over-mechanization, and was largely the effort of the late Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) who combatted it with interpretative pictorialism and opened up the era of personal expression and mood in photography. Among the earliest adherents of this cause were Gertrude Käsebier and Edward Steichen. Mrs. Käsebier, a member of the Photo-Secession, a society formed at the beginning of the century to advance photography, made one of the first attempts at artistic portraiture. Steichen, in

*Reprinted, with minor changes, from the catalogue of an exhibition under the same title, shown Jan. 15-Feb. 15 of this year.

BRETT WESTON—"White Sands, New Mexico"

charge of American aerial photography during World War I, and active in many phases of the medium, was one of the leaders of the new, or straight photography which brought directness and realistic clarity into the camera. A group of his work, representing a range of years from 1903 to 1934, is something of a history of American photography. The early portrait with opaque background, conceived from painting, gives way in the experimental 'twenties to the abstract study in form and light, the realistic document and portraits, and subsequently follow the sophisticated portraits of the middle and late 'twenties, and lastly, the suave fashion plate of the early 'thirties. In all phases and in each subject the brilliance and artistic grasp make the work perdurable.

Of the many currents which developed in the 'twenties, the period of general rebellion against traditionalism and academism in the arts, the most decisive for the American camera was straight photography. In addition to Steichen, among those to develop photography in accordance with the principles of fidelity to nature and purity of technique were

Edward Weston, Charles Sheeler, and Berenice Abbott. Weston pioneered to show the inherent design and individual interest of all forms, enlarging pictorialism with a concentration on the potentialities of the natural; to 19th century softness and sentiment, Weston opposed the straightforward clarity, simplicity and directness which characterized the modern era, and which is authentically American.

Berenice Abbott, once associated with Man Ray and long one of America's most significant woman photographers, is among the ablest creative workers in the medium, bringing freshness of vision and vigor to the acute and faithful representation which she helped to inaugurate. Each of her pictures, portrait or scene, is whole and monumental, uniting excellent technique with excellent observation. Precision of detail and striking pattern and texture are revealed in her experiments with natural objects, such as the apple, walnut and corn, made with her own process.

The chief followers of Weston were his son Brett, and Ansel Adams. Adams ranks among the leading photographers of nature produced in the country. His sensitive and distinctive work indicates to stereotyped and sentimental versions of nature the level of translation which can realize the finest and most characteristic quality of the elements in a spirit clear and penetrating. The representative work of Brett Weston shows him concentrating on the type of grand and austere sand study which has made the name famous. His series of New Mexico scenes (see *Page 3*) have the photogenic purity and beauty which make these prints timeless. More conservative are the Western pictorial views of Josef Muench who follows a tradition still very prevalent among a large number of photographers seeking a soft, atmospheric effect.

Simultaneous with the great development of straight photography there occurred technical and conceptual innovations which instead of trying to obtain increasingly life-like effects, sought to enlarge the imaginative and creative potentialities of the medium. Moholy-Nagy and Man Ray both worked with new devices, opening up avenues for experimentation which in varying degrees transform natural objects and relationships through the manipulation of light, angle, plate and color, in short, through a control of technical means over and beyond those employed for the straight photograph. Man Ray, the leading participant in the introduction of Dadaism in America during the first World War and long associated with the Surrealists, was perhaps more appreciated abroad than in his own country. He developed his photographic images, *Rayographs,* in Paris, where they became highly popular and influential. Man Ray's contribution, perhaps the most spectacular single photographic interpretation of the century, is that of an artist who looks to the time when, as he says, photography will "become Art and not remain simply AN art as it is today."

Erwin Blumenfeld, the distinguished French photographer now living in this country, ranks as one of the greatest interpreters of the medium. His work, recently shown by the Museum for the first time in Southern California, shows a powerful grasp of the psychological as well as artistic effects of photography. Blumenfeld does not take the straight picture as he finds it in life, in normal light; he seeks rather by deformation and extreme psychological effects to bring out the hidden and unknown quality of his objects. His quest is not realism, but the mystery of reality. Thus, oblique perspective transforms the 15th century Clovis tapestry into a moving distortion of forms (as though seen in water), endowed with greater vitality than the original pageantry figures. By the same means, the loom of the interior of Rouen is forcibly conveyed. Blumenfeld's creations may be fantastic, cruel, existentialist, as Surrealists are existentialist, but they are all unforgettable. That photography can be significantly employed as an instrument in psychoanalysis has been well perceived by him.

JAMES FITZSIMMONS—"Conference of Dream Makers"

Of the younger men working in the experimental camp, several are outstanding in California, among them James Fitzsimmons, George Barrows, and Thomas Y. Yee. Fitzsimmons stands at the polar end of orthodox photography, eschewing both the realistic form of straight photography and the overtly psychological content of Surrealist photography for compositions of strong color, texture and design which are the equal of anything done by abstract painting (see illustration above). While technically he avails himself of the gamut of available processes, where content is concerned he turns, not like Moholy to light and form, but to the unconscious, searching to find the pith and meaning underlying the myth and symbol which play, as he says, as powerful a part in our imaginative life as does the atomic bomb in actuality. The grasp of the essential which is afforded by abstraction is manipulated by Fitzsimmons to arrive at an approximation of states of consciousness of experience which intends as "expression of the inexpressible."

Barrows' works are arresting from the standpoint of texture and variety of form; as highly suggestive as the penetrative photography of X-ray or microscopic enlargement, disclosing the strange and curious patternings beneath the ostensible regularity of external and surface appearance. Such works are not only beautiful as abstract designs of striking textural quality created by brilliant light effects and, in some cases, with rich tonal color, but they also afford the stimulus which allows us to appreciate in a degree the relationships of matter as suggested by organic shapes in mobile, flowing action.

Yee, on the other hand, still employing natural forms, goes closer to Surrealism in his juxtapositions and interpenetrations of simultaneous double images, lights and shadows, which overcome the conventions of time and space. How sensitively he can handle texture is shown in the strangely, grotesquely beautiful *Naked Combed Nature,* a unique interpretation embodying the poetry instinctive in his work.

Since the 'thirties, documentary photography has become increasingly popular as the study of social conditions underscored by economic stress demanded actual settings and events on which to base investigation. The documentary photograph, shot to record aspects of the social scene with absolute fidelity to fact and condition, is the closest and most direct experience of existing circumstances and events afforded by the camera. In the work of Max Yavno the contemporary scene passes in grim review and reminder, the faces of his puzzling little girl and reflecting man both mirroring the same lostness seen in the squalid scenes of the Negro tenement. Facets of city life isolated and exposed by the relentless eye of the camera reveal conditions which dismay and stir to humanitarian thinking. Yavno captures the utter bleakness of certain aspects of existence, as well as the casual incidents occurring so candidly on the city streets.

In Wayne Miller, one of the younger photographers developed during and since World War II, we see the immediate influence of post-war realism which compels these observers to concentrate upon day-by-day actuality, which has become the most important photographic subject of all. Formerly with the aviation unit of the U. S. Navy, Miller began photography with a series on the life of the northern Negro, but he shows an equal interest in the plight of the helpless war children of Europe. He records and interprets with the intention of revealing the emotions common to humanity in order "to explain man to man." He is indicative of a new trend in documentary photography which has been shaped and sharpened by the crisis of the war and its aftermath.

Short of the invention of photography itself, the most sensational development associated with it is color. Known already in the latter 19th century, the three-color filter and complementary printing process successively progressed through improvement and improvement to the technical perfection of today which has brought a new dimension, as it were, to advertising and motion picture, newspapers and lithography. The controversy over realistic color photography, however, has not yet abated, for while on the one hand it appears, to certain groups, to fulfill successfully all the purposes of painting, to others, its very sharp, physical reproduction of nature only points up its essential inferiority to painting.

Of the leaders of American commercial color photography, Victor Keppler's enthusiasm for what he terms the "eighth art," is reflected in his glamorous carbro displays in which the warmth and luxury of chromatic realism is concentrated. The complete objective reality sought for so long by some schools of painting and graphic arts is in work of this kind realized with a technical finish and exactness still being enlarged and perfected in American laboratories.

A more sophisticated form of photography, that attuned to the spirit of fashion magazines, is the work of Fritz Henle and George Platt Lynes. Henle's camera shifts from a scintillating *The Lights of Manhattan* (see *Front Cover*), which becomes an intensified swirling Baroque cupola, to more direct shots whose aims are not searching human documentation, but primarily human interest from several, contrasting realms. George Platt Lynes, equally expert in the art of advertising and fashion display, specializes in the glamorous portrait of society and celebrity, to which he brings a fine sense for quality and grace. His study of the English poet, W. H. Auden, now resident in America, captures a good deal of the subject's personality in the informal pose.

A more physically penetrative seeing has been among the contributions of modern photography in the field of scientific work. From the reproduction of all variety of celestial bodies to the uncovering of the minutiae of cells, scientific photography has made available to the naked eye the basic organization of life in its dynamic energy, capturing visually the quick of existence itself as it moves, unfolds, blossoms. Harry Kane photographs objects with a speed lamp at the rate of 1/5,000 cycles per second, thus enabling the bursting of plant capsules, the winging of the barn swallow, or the momentary trapping of a rat to be instantaneously realized. Where the virtues of photography as the revelation of nature are concerned the efforts of scientific work must be considered preeminent.

Then intention of the Museum's recent exhibition, then, was to afford a picture of a group of contemporary American photographers in a wide range, from the first generation of great innovators to the latest and youngest of experimenters, including a cross-section of the various divisions and interpretations in the medium. Its purpose was to show classics such as Steichen, the Westons, Abbott and Adams with young abstractionists such as Fitzsimmons and Barrows, and to present the fashionable world of Keppler, Henle, Platt Lynes, and the realistic world of Max Yavno and Wayne Miller side by side with the poetic and dream world of Man Ray, Erwin Blumenfeld and Thomas Yee. American photography has an increasingly wide and many-sided expression today, which can best be appreciated by assembling the various currents which are all contributing to its particularly vital and energetic condition and pointing to many of its directions to come.

—Ebria Feinblatt

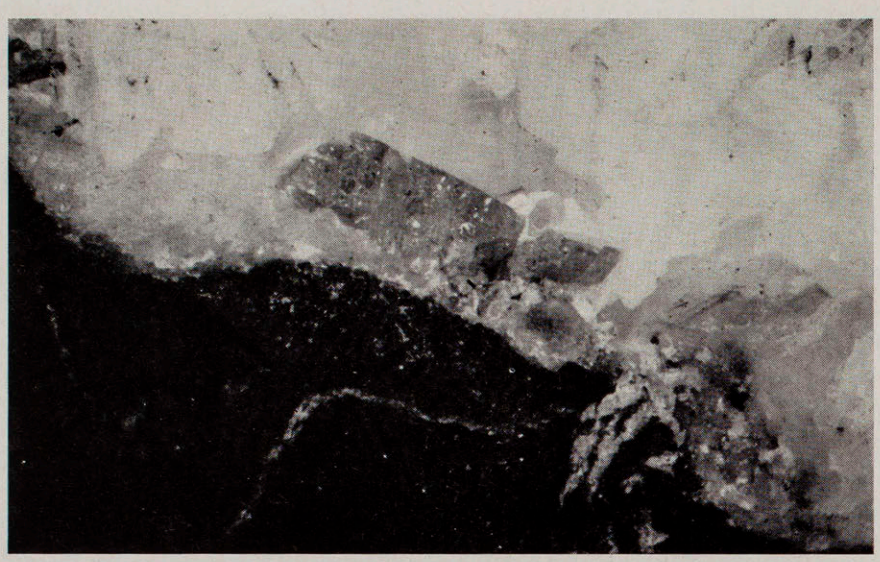
THE EMERALD MINES OF MUZO

Collecting Minerals in Central and South America—Part I

NOTE—Warren R. Jones, the author of these notes, writes of a collecting trip he and two companions made to Mexico, Central and South America between March and September of last year. He offered in advance to bring back to the Museum a representative suite of the material found on his trip, and was officially designated a field collector for the Museum. His findings were exhibited at the Museum in October and November. In Part II of his notes, to follow, Mr. Jones will further report on Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru.

The emerald mines of Muzo are located north of Bogota, the capital of Colombia, in the western part of the Eastern Cordillera of the Colombian Andes, at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. They have produced some of the finest emeralds in the world, and were worked long before the Spanish came to this hemisphere. Although the Spanish knew of their existence in 1537, it was some time before they were able to penetrate the area and locate the mines.

At present the operation of the mines is a monopoly of the Colombian Government, under the direction of the Banco de la Republica. The Muzo mines have been closed for about nine years, and were still in the process of re-opening at the time we visited them. Rapidly spreading vegetation had covered most of the workings, and only a few had been exposed again when we were there last April.

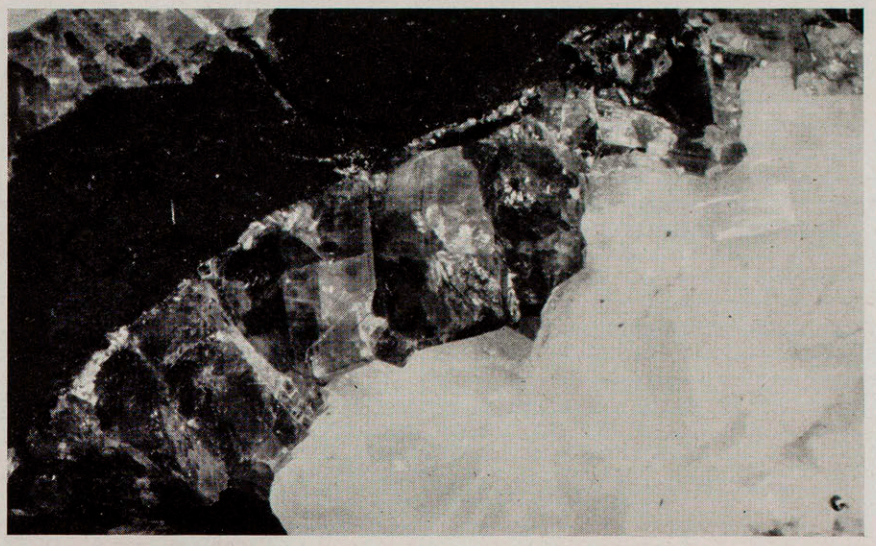


Beryl, var. emerald, crystal (*above center*) in a calcite vein, against carbonaceous shale (dark, *below*). *Three times actual size.*

We arrived in Bogota by plane from Costa Rica, where we had put our jeep on a boat for Colombia. This city was founded in 1538, and its old architecture is very well preserved. The streets are narrow, and as the buildings are placed very close to the corners so that there is little visibility, the ear has replaced the eye as the principal guide in driving, resulting in continuous horn-blowing. The citizens of Bogota are reputed to speak the purest Spanish in South America, are of almost pure Spanish descent, and are more business-like than the people of most South American cities. The climate did not appeal to us, being cold and damp, and the 8,600-foot elevation was difficult to get used to, especially when we exerted ourselves; but the great courtesy and helpfulness of the Colombian Government, and the charm of the ladies who ran the pension which was our home there, more than compensated for this.

When we first planned to visit the emerald mines, we did not realize what a difficult thing we were attempting. Our principal interest in the mines was the specimens of the rare minerals codazzite and parisite we hoped to obtain there, and not emeralds; but it is almost as difficult for a foreigner to visit these mines as it would be to visit Oak Ridge. It was only through the goodwill and efforts of Dr. Gilberto Botero-Restrepo, Dr. Roberto Sarmiento-Soto of the Colombian National Geological Service, and Don Eduardo Gaitan de Narvaez of the Banco de la Republica, that we were able to gain entrance.

By train from Bogota to Chiquinquira, and by truck from Chiquinquira to Muzo is about 80 miles. Our truck driver was intoxicated, and quite nonchalant about the 1000-foot drops along the muddy one lane road. Darkness fell soon after we left Chiquinquira, and we could no longer see the steep cliff faces below us, but as the driver used no headlights until about a half hour after dark, this did not make us any more comfortable. We had to skirt several recent landslides, and dig ourselves out of one, caused by the continuous and drenching rain. We were in the back of the truck with about ten others, and when we at last arrived at Muzo were tired, hungry and soaking wet. The "Hotel" we stayed in



Codazzite crystals between carbonaceous shale (dark, *above*) and calcite (light, *below*). *Three times actual size.*

that night and the next was furnished with hot and cold running pigs, and our room and beds were so well populated with ticks that we were very grateful for the hammocks supplied us by the Geological Service before we left Bogota. Our meals were punctuated by the attempts of dogs and cockroaches to obtain a bite or two, and the mosquitoes were not easily discouraged. The cockroaches were monstrous, and evidently in better health than the Muzo Indians who inhabit the area. These Indians, once fierce and warlike, are now living in extreme poverty and ill health, due to the unstable economy of that part of the country, and despite the best efforts of the Government to improve their lot.

We left Muzo on mules sent out from the mines for us, and traveled for half a day through the intensely tropical, wildly forested region that South American travelers expect to see, but rarely do. The vegetation is unbelievably dense, with all types of insects, butterflies, and beautiful flowers, and each parasitic growth would seem to have another living on it in turn.

The administrator of the mines, Don Benjamin Jaramillo, greeted us and made us feel quite at home, and supplied us with good, clean, comfortable quarters and good food. Our own mineral collecting equipment was in our trailer with the jeep, and still in transit to Colombia, so the Government supplied everything we needed in that line.

At the mines, daytime temperatures were about 100, with moisture completely saturating the air. The mines themselves are called "bancos," and are in the emerald-bearing cap of black, decomposed carbonaceous limestones and shales, intersected with irregular veins of calcite, forming a portion of the rocks covering the area, which mostly belong to a series of Lower Cretaceous carbonaceous shales and limestones, intruded by veins of albite feldspar, pyrite, and pegmatite dikes. They are worked on the steep slopes of the mountains, and it is only a matter of minutes until one becomes caked with a layer of thick, black mud, and very tired and hot from working in the direct rays of the tropical sun. As the mines had not been worked for some time, it was necessary for us to spend about a

day in preparatory work, uncovering some of the calcite veins where we expected to find our specimens. The emeralds occur in these thin calcite veins, as well as parisite, a fluocarbonate of the cerium metals, which is found as thin, brown, tapering hexagonal crystals, and codazzite, a carbonate of cerium, calcium, magnesium, and iron, in ash-gray rhombohedral crystals.* Accessory minerals include white fluorite, white apatite, and small but perfect pyrite crystals covered with a beautiful red-brown tarnish. These pyrite crystals are to be found all through the surrounding rocks, in the shales and limestones as crystals up to ¾ inch, as irregular crystals and clusters in the albitized rock, and as tiny crystals in the calcite.

The emeralds are as a rule embedded in calcite, and the few we found were either already fractured, or fell to pieces when removed from the matrix. Occasional crystals are partly in cavities, and exhibit multiple, tapering terminations. The parisite crystals we found were up to two inches in length, but due to their softness and perfect basal cleavage, almost all broke up when the rock was split. The few small perfect crystals we found had formed parallel to the cleavage planes of the calcite, and so were not damaged when the calcite was broken up. To obtain these, however, we had to crush several tons of calcite into small pieces. The codazzite crystals were more plentiful, in cavities or embedded in the calcite, and we obtained quite a few perfect crystals.

Pan-American Highway in Guatemala

During the evening at the mines, the insects cluster on the screens of the houses, almost completely covering it, and making considerable noise by whirring, squeaking, and rattling. We took many pictures, both still and movie, but due partly to the over-all darkness, and lack of contrasts and partly to the intense humidity which spoiled some of the film, we do not have much to show for our efforts.

We returned to Bogota, and some time later flew to Buenaventura to get our jeep and trailer, which had arrived there from Costa Rica. We had left the States on March 10th, driving on the so-called "Pan-American Highway" from Laredo, Texas, to southern Costa

*Parisite was discovered in 1835 by J. J. Paris, owner of the emerald mines of Muzo, then was named and described by Bunsen in 1845 (Lieb. Ann. 53, 147). Codazzite was first described by R. L. Codazzi in 1927 (Bol. Biblioteca de Museo Nacional Bogota, p. 94, 1927) and named in honor of the geographer Augustin Codazzi.

Rica, where the road completely disappears, except for a short stretch in southern Mexico which is impassable. In northern Guatemala, the road is dirt, very steep, and several streams must be forded. In the rest of Guatemala it is just as steep, but at least there are no rivers to cross. The sections in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and through the corner of Honduras are in good condition, but in northern Costa Rica the road for all practical purposes is impassable. From the Nicaraguan border south for seventeen miles, there is no trace of a road. We started out going south through fields, over hills, across seven fords, through a farmyard whose owner charged us a dollar to pass, following an occasional path, but more often aiming at a general direction. The rest of the distance to the capital of Costa Rica, San Jose, is also bad but passable. There is a short paved stretch near San Jose. This city was to us the most pleasant and enjoyable place in Central America, with friendly and courteous inhabitants. We know now by experience that driving to South America is the worst possible way to get there, and from what we saw of the Pan-American highway, believe that it will be the worst way for a very long time. In many places the road is disappearing faster than it is being constructed. The easiest parts have been pushed through, but the remaining stretches are nightmares of cost and construction—cost up to $500,000 per mile, with earthmoving of 230,000 cubic yards of dirt per mile in southern Costa Rica [personal communication from Mr. Herschberger, Public Road Administrator in Costa Rica], to say nothing of the swampy, disease-ridden, unsurveyed territory in Panama.

We visited one other locality in Colombia, the gold mines of Marmato, where we obtained specimens of marmatite, an iron-bearing variety of sphalerite, zinc sulphide, and after another trip to Buenaventura to ship our specimens, headed south to Ecuador and Peru.

—Warren R. Jones

THE CALIFORNIA WAPITI

The California Wapiti, though commonly called an elk, is more closely related to the European Red Deer. The Indian name Wapiti derives from two words—*wab* meaning "white" and *atik* meaning "deer." Since the elk is a deer, and since his mature coat does have a gray-white sheen, Wapiti seems a better name for him than "elk."

We usually associate the Wapiti with the Rocky Mountains, Montana, Wyoming, and Canada, where the American Wapiti occurs in imposing numbers. Yet here in California we have a species of Wapiti found in no other place in the world—truly, California's own. He is generally known by the name Dwarf, or Tule, Elk, but the California Wapiti is actually only slightly smaller and lighter in color than his better-known relative. So is he smaller and lighter than another relative, the Roosevelt Elk, sometimes seen in California along the Redwood Highway, but actually a native of Washington and Oregon.

Unlike his two northern cousins, the California Wapiti prefers the tule sloughs bordering rivers and lakes, and is quite content to remain in the valleys during the fierce summer heat. Some students have theorized that the characteristics now peculiar to the California Wapiti are the result of two factors: first, a progressive movement away from an original habitat similar to the lush lands of the upper Pacific Coast and/or the altitudes of the

Rockies; and second, the consequent inbreeding among the bands isolated by this migration. But however the California Wapiti acquired his present coloring and size, he is now entitled to recognition as a distinct species, *Cervus nannodes*.

By the middle of the last century he had so prospered and multiplied that he was roaming the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys in vast herds. Then came the Gold Rush, the boom of San Francisco, *and the meat-hunters!* The meat-hunting gentry, intent on filling the stomachs of the mushrooming populations of San Francisco and the Mother Lode—and, coincidentally, filling their own pockets—probably did not know that the California Wapiti provides meat that today is recognized as more nourishing and more easily digested than the most expensive steer beef. But they had no difficulty in realizing that they had found a gold-mine on the hoof as they ruthlessly continued, during the ten years between 1850 and 1860, to slaughter the Wapiti herds.

Only a remnant band is known to have escaped the hunters and to have found a haven in the tule and willow swamps near Buena Vista Lake, on the great Miller and Lux cattle ranch in the southern San Joaquin. Mr. Miller adopted and undertook to protect the refugee band, even to the extent of providing fence-riders to safeguard the animals from

poachers. To Mr. Miller a large measure of thanks, for the foresight that kept the California Wapiti from sharing the fate of the California Grizzly Bear—extinction!

The history of this isolated little band is a drama of conservation in which private, state, and federal interests have combined efforts. In 1903 the band was turned over to the protective custody of Uncle Sam, and an area in Sequoia National Park was set aside as a new home for part of the band; a few years later an area in Yosemite was similarly reserved for others of the band. Unfortunately, neither of these places proved to be a natural habitat for the Wapiti—in fact, all of the Sequoia group died. In 1933 the California State Fish and Game Commission took a hand and, in conjunction with the National Park Service and G. W. Dow, a conservation-conscious private citizen of Lone Pine, undertook to relocate the survivors of the Yosemite group.

The area between the town of Independence and Tinnemaha Dam in the Upper Owens Valley was selected, both because it seemed to approximate the original habitat of the Wapiti, and because it was public domain (related to the watershed of the City of Los Angeles) used only for grazing. Carl Walters, Senior Game Warden of the Independence District, supervised the project for the Fish and Game Commission; Chief Ranger, the late F. S. Townsley of Yosemite, represented the Park Service; and Private Citizen Dow provided all of the crating and one of the three needed trucks to support his conviction that the California Wapiti, like the Redwoods, should be preserved for California. Twenty-seven animals were crated at Yosemite and hauled by truck down the San Joaquin Valley to Mojave, then up the Owens Valley to a corral 14 miles north of Independence. It was a long, hot, and arduous journey for men, animals and equipment, but the Wapiti took it in stride and needed only a few recuperative days in the corral. Then they were turned loose, and the twenty-seven of 1933 have become a thriving band of more than 400 in 1947.

A recently completed habitat group of California Wapiti, now to be seen at the Museum, contains animals from both the San Joaquin and Owens Valleys. This new group replaces an older presentation of the Wapiti—which was, incidentally, the first habitat group and one of the features of the official opening of the first unit of the Greater Museum in 1925. The passing of time brought progressive deterioration of the original group's background (painted directly on plaster), and for some years it has been one of the writer's ambitions to relocate and present the animals in a permanent and more typical setting. This ambition has been realized—and broadened—by redesigning the group and installing it in the upper Hall of North American Mammals, where it will soon be joined by a habitat group of the American Wapiti.

Three of the five animals in the new California group came from the original San Joaquin band—after a stop-over of 22 years in the first habitat group. The other two animals (the larger bull and the recumbent cow) were obtained by the Museum, with the cooperation of the State Fish and Game Commission, from the Owens Valley band, and are now meeting the public for the first time. The two newcomers were mounted by Herman T. Beck, present Museum Taxidermist. The setting for the group reproduces the habitat of the San Joaquin Valley band near Buena Vista Lake, with a background painted (on canvas) by J. Robert Sewell, Museum Staff Artist.

In presenting this new group of rare Californians, the Museum may hope to stimulate public interest in a plan to convert the Independence-to-Tinnemaha area of Owens Valley into a State Game Refuge. Surely our native California Wapiti, representing a unique link in our natural heritage from the past and for the future, deserves a home of his own at last.

—MELVILLE N. LINCOLN

CALIFORNIA COSTUME OF THE 1830's—1840's

Part II—Women's Dress

Although the *caballero* of California was quite a peacock in his way, as we have seen,* his womenfolk were also colorfully dressed. But they were many years behind the current styles in Mexico, and their garb, however fine, maintained a simplicity that was alien to the fashion centers of Mexico proper.

There were good reasons for this lag. The pueblos and ranchos were hundreds of leagues distant from those large cities where the modes of the day were established. At times fabrics, even thread, needles and buttons, were quite scarce. These items had to be brought in the dank holds of small vessels, or packed slowly overland in chests and bales on the backs of mules and horses. And there were no large shopping centers, such as we know today. The storehouses at the missions were the nearest approach to such places, but these could not maintain a constant supply of the comforts and niceties, or even the necessities of life.

The missions did, however, have a surprising number and range of items on hand, which were sold to the people in the pueblos and ranchos for hides, tallow or coin. For example, the inventories of the store-rooms, maintained during the 1820's-1830's at La Purisima Mission, near Lompoc, read like the advertisement of a modern department store.

Here one could obtain handkerchiefs of cotton or silk, plain or embroidered. There were shawls, shoes, *sarapes*, all sorts of plain and printed cottons, woolen cloth of various colors, or fine silks from China. On the shelves were bolts of red and green damask, fine Brittany linens both stamped and plain, flowered calicoes, muslins and dimity, satins, coarse and fine cloth of every description, ribbons, laces, gold and silver sequins, round white buttons, yellow buttons and the more handsome filigreed buttons. There were all sorts of braids for trimming, gold and silver galloons, silk floss, cotton thread and twine, material for skirts and coats as well as shirting.

Early visitors to California sometimes spoke disparagingly of the feminine vogues. Duhaut-Cilly, for example, in his "Account of California in the Years 1827-1828," was most ungallant. Said he: "The women are ludicrously dressed: their costume is a bizarre mixture of foreign and California fashions; it is particularly when they borrow something from the Mexican women, that they become extravagant; for these Mexicans [those who were in California] are so laughably dressed, that one should have a large portion of gravity to preserve seriousness in the presence of their toilet.

"I still recall the merriment seizing us at sight of the headdresses beautifying, one holy day, the two daughters of Miguel Gonzalez, the commandant at Monterey. I do not know which of us had made them believe that two of those pasteboard melons which our ladies made use of for some time to carry about their work, were the latest style of hats in Paris, and that they had only to add some ribbons and feathers to give them the finishing touch. They bought them eagerly, and having trimmed them according to instructions which had been given to them, they believed they would make a lively sensation, and cause all the Californian women to burst with vexation; but we had charitably taken the whole community into the secret, so they were greeted with a general explosion of loud bursts of laughter, and the name *cabezas de melones* (melon heads) remained with them.

*Part I of this article, devoted to Men's Dress, appeared in the last issue of the *Quarterly*—Vol. 6, No. 3.

Colored lithograph by Carlos Nebel, showing the "China Poblana" costume as worn in Mexico during the 1830's-1840's. The same style was followed in California. Left, a *vaquero* is putting on his leather leggings, or *botas*.

(*The Coronel Collection*)

"One sees, then, very few California women keeping strictly to the extreme simple costume of the country, which is composed of a petticoat, the upper part white, and the rest red; this is the *enaguas* which I have spoken of another place; it hangs from the hips where it forms a much puffed-out pad. A white skirt of the same form as the man's, a *rebozo* (muffler) of blue and white cotton, white stockings and black shoes — there is their complete attire. In general they have very beautiful hair which they allow to fall behind in a thick braid, as do the men. Those whom coquetry obliges to have something more formal, wish to become elegant, and are only grotesque. We should prefer still more the completely indigenous dress to the hodge podge of their stolen toilet."

No doubt the French observer was quite sincere, but his description of a "stolen toilet" was unwarranted. The women of California were but observing the customs their forefathers had brought from Mexico. The various items of dress described by Duhaut-Cilly had all been bits of good Mexican apparel.

The basic costume of the women in California was known as "the China Poblana" in Mexico, where this ensemble had prevailed since the 17th century. Even today it is known as *el traje nacional* (the national garb) although it now varies somewhat from the 17th century original.

Don Antonio Franco Coronel (1817-1894) and his wife Mariana, in costumes of the 1830's-1840's. Her skirt is red and green with gilt spangles, and she wears a *camorra* (kerchief) about her head. Don Antonio is dressed in the traditional short-clothes, with *botas* and *babuchas* (slipper-like shoes) of green velvet and leather.
(*Photograph, the Museum Collection*)

This costume (Page 15) consists of a voluminous flowing skirt, very simple in cut, in fact, merely a large, wide sack open at both ends and with a drawstring at the top. In the beginning, this skirt was made of red baize and was worn with a white underskirt equally voluminous. During the 19th century the skirt, as described by Duhaut-Cilly, was made with the lower part in a solid color, perhaps red, green or yellow, or of some figured stuff. With the skirt was worn a white chemise with short ruffled or puffed sleeves, with a narrow silk ribbon threaded around the neck opening and tied in front with a small bow. A red or green silk sash confined the waist and was tied at the rear, leaving the short, fringed ends dangling.

The *rebozo* (Page 17) worn by the women was a long, relatively narrow shawl with fringed ends. The *rebozo* was to the woman what the *sarape* was to the man. It was worn as a head-covering when venturing out-of-doors or going into church; makeshift baby carriers were fashioned out of it; it took the place of a shopping bag, or it might be used as a temporary bed covering. The *rebozo* was usually of striped cotton, wool or silk, in various shades of blue and white, black and white or brown and white. The finer ones were of silk. Occasionally a woman might wear an heirloom of the 18th century. Such *rebozos* were often hand-embroidered with floral and human figures, and differed radically in appearance from the conventional, narrow scarves of the 19th century.

Rebozos varied in prices according to the cloth used. In Mexico, one might sell for $15 or $16 yet in California the same shawl would bring $150. The figure of a California woman shown on Page 17 indicates one use of the *rebozo,* draped negligently around the shoulders. On Page 15 is shown the customary manner of wearing it when going out-of-doors or to mass. In cold weather it might be drawn across the face like a veil, until only the eyes of the wearer were visible. A typical pattern of a blue and white *rebozo* is shown on this page, where Don Antonio Coronel is using one as a stool cover, the fringed ends falling down near his right leg.

Hats were never popular among California women. A broad brimmed, low crowned, floppy straw hat was sometimes worn if the wearer was going for a long journey in the hot sun. But usually the only head gear was the *rebozo* or, at times, the *camorra,* which was a black silk handkerchief wound around the head (this page).

Neckerchiefs were sometimes in evidence (Pages 15 and 16). Frequently these were huge silk or cotton handkerchiefs with an all-over floral pattern in bright colors. When they were large enough they were worn with the point hanging down the back of the neck and

two folded corners crossed over the breast and fastened either to the sash or to the front of the waist.

Shoes of the early 19th century were generally of moiré silk or satin—exceedingly narrow, low, slipper-like footgear. The finer ones were of well-dressed kid, and wealthier *rancheros* imported such shoes by the dozen pair from France, through the Yanqui traders. Stockings were of cotton or silk. If the latter, they might be made of Mexican, Spanish or Chinese silk. During this period all stockings were straight, formless things, and like the shoes were interchangeable for either the right or left foot.

Besides the typical "China Poblana" costume, women also wore variants of other European or Mexican dresses. Ruffled dresses of figured cotton cloth, having short ruffled sleeves such as that shown on Page 15, were much worn. Another type was the high-waisted, long-sleeved dress with a balloon effect in the upper part of the sleeve. Fine silks and satins were worn at the balls.

Said Coronel when describing the costume of the ladies in the 1830's: "The dress worn by ladies of some means in 1834 and 1835 consisted of a narrow skirt made of muslin or silk, a high tight waist, trimmed with ribbon or flowers or in any way that the caprice of the lady dictated, and an underskirt of red or any other color according to the taste of the person.

Jose Arnaz, a merchant in Los Angeles in the 1830's-1840's, described women's fashions in California thus: "The dress of the women, when I first came to California, was very plain. The ordinary dresses were of calico, English or American, while the rich women used French goods, which were dearer. The wealthy had silk dresses which they wore at balls or other functions. The dresses were made in a similar fashion to that of the present time, but plain, without other adornment than ruffles at the edge. White cotton stockings were worn, and at balls, satin shoes.

"On their heads they wore fancy tortoise-shell combs and some of the senoras had silk *mantillas* to wear to church.

"Most of the well-to-do women had necklaces of gold beads, some of fine pearls, gold earrings and finger rings of the same metal, sometimes set with diamonds, emeralds and other precious stones. False hair was unknown in the country; all were adorned with their own natural hair."

The *mantillas* of which Arnaz spoke were of black or white-cream silk lace. One type of *mantilla* was so made as to have a certain sewed portion of the shawl fit over the high tortoise-shell comb, while the rest of the garment fell in graceful folds over the shoulders of the wearer.

Model wearing a typical ruffled dress of printed cotton. Note the high comb, the satin slippers, the fringed *rebozo* (scarf). From a series of eighteen-inch figures modeled for the Museum by Diana Bovee.

Many of the pearls for the necklaces and earrings came from the waters of the Gulf of California, at La Paz in Baja California.

De Mofras, another Frenchman visiting the coast in 1841-1842, observed: "The women dress more simply. Their costume consists usually of an Indian print or silk dress whose cut faintly reflects the French fashions, and the *rebozo*, or kind of scarf, made of silk or cotton which can be thrown over the head and which is replaced on festive occasions by fine crepe shawls embroidered in China. A few still use the black, Spanish lace *mantilla* . . . Usually women wear their hair in long braids or allow it to fall loose, but on formal occasions a scarf of black silk is placed over the head."

The Chinese embroidered shawls of which De Mofras spoke are still to be found in the treasured, painted-leather chests (also from China) which are now preserved as heirlooms by the descendants of some of the first families of California.

These shawls are often called "Spanish shawls," but as De Mofras notes, they were Chinese in origin. They were shipped to Mexico or California from China in square lacquered boxes done in lustrous black and gold. The boxes too were kept as valued bits of household furniture.

With the increase of the trade in hides during the 1830's and 1840's, more and more European and American-made merchandise poured into California. The ship masters fitted out display rooms on board their vessels, and thither came the wealthy ranch owners and their families, to partake of the Yanquis' hospitality and buy their goods. The women-folk squealed with delight over the silks and satins, and *papa*, basking in the limelight of his own importance and perspiring a bit, perhaps, from over-indulgence in French brandy or Jamaica rum, spread his gold pieces with lavish hand, or ordered hundreds of head of cattle slaughtered to provide hides in exchange for the foreign goods. It is said that a wealthy *ranchero* once gave five hundred head of cattle, selected on the hoof by a ship master, for a single embroidered *rebozo*. Even in these days of inflation, that seems a high price to pay for a narrow strip of cloth! However, cattle were cheap in those times. Hides were the "leather dollars" of California, and men of substance never reckoned the cost when they or their families wanted something. Truly this was the "Golden Age," and when it passed much of the glamor and romance of an era passed with it.

—Arthur Woodward

NEW MEMBERS

THE MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

A long and welcome list of new members have been received into the Museum Association since publication of the Fall 1947 issue of the *Quarterly*:

Life	2
Benefactor	2
Sustaining	1
Annual	216
Honorary, 1947-48	8

For want of space in the present issue, these names (as of January 10th) and subsequent additions will be printed in the next issue of the *Quarterly*—Spring 1948.

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THE LOW COST OF GIVING

In this month when Income Tax matters beset us all, friends of the Museum may find pleasant surprises in the table reproduced below.

Here are shown, for various levels of income, the low actual costs of a gift to the Museum. Considered in the light of tax deductions, a gift to the Museum is seen to afford important and perhaps unsuspected economies.

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5,000	75%	50	37.50
10,000	64%	100	64.00
15,000	55%	500	275.00
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